Right from the beginning, the Prince shows a deep concern fcr the success of his marriage. In the episode in which he and Charlotte hunt the London shops for a wedding-gift for Maggie, they come across the cracked golden bow! in the Bloomsbury shop; and as Charlotte suggests it as a wedding-gift, the Prince declines to take it. He confesses that he is superstitious and that a cracked golden bowl, however exquisite and lovely, portends evil fcr his happiness, safety, and marriage. The picture of him that emerges is one of a weH-bred youngman, thoroughly charming and deeply affectionate, self-assured, but deferential and capable of sincere gratitude to the Ververs and Fanny Assingham, and full of good intentions and good faith all around. When the well-meaning Prince is about to open a new and glorious chapter in his personal life, history intrudes on it in the person of Charlotte to swing him back to his past of crime, folly and evil. The Prince and Charlolte are old lovers, who had separated because of their poverty. The Europeanised Charlotte too, like the Prince, has no moral sense, but, unlike him, she does not have any desire to acquire it. She is an intimate friend of Maggie, as they had been school-mates at Paris, and she comes to London to attend Maggie's wedding, and also to spend a single intimate hour with her old lover, Prince Amerigo. Her reappearance in his life makes the Prince frankly uneasy and unhappy. Mrs. Assingham also knows their past, and is disturbed over the reappearance of Charlotte. But she believes in their good faith, and in fact. Charlotte and the Prince behave "beautifully" for some time.

After her marriage, Maggie, who adores her father, feels that he is alone and unhappy. In order that the void in his emotional life might be happily filled up, she persuades her father to marry her dear friend. Charlotte, whose beauty, charm and social brilliance have greatly impressed the little millionaire. Partly to please his daughter, and partly to satisfy his own fascination, Adam Verver marries Charlotte.

The simple-minded and innocent father ard daughter mistakenly think that they have solved each other's problems satisfactorily. Their simplicity and innocence are liabilities in a world, where to be ignorant cf evil is oneself to be evil. Seated at his table, Adam Verver appears to Amerigo like a "little boy shyly entertaining in virtue of seme improvised rank," and Maggie on one occasion, strikes Fanny as "a rrtschievous child, playing on the floor../'[4]'*' The father and the daughter are not separated by their marriages, but are drawn together more intimately than ever Before. The birth of a spn t